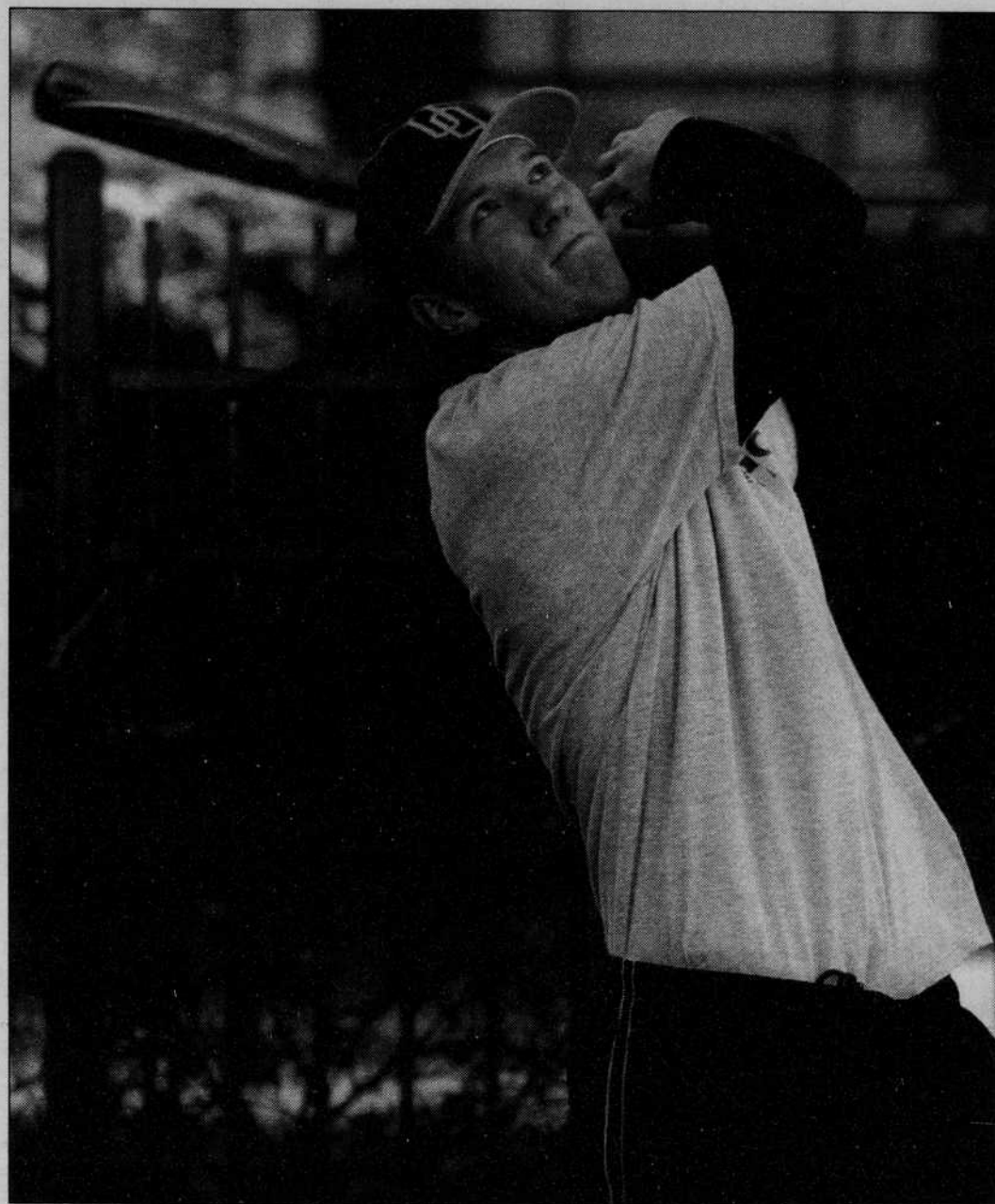


SPORTS

Sports Editor:
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Best bet
UEFA Champion's League:
Juventus vs. Manchester United
11:30 a.m., ESPN2

Tuesday, February 25, 2003



Brad Ficek and the Oregon Club Baseball Team play on after the sport was cut from the varsity ranks in 1981.

Mark McCambridge Emerald

Swingin' in the rain

With no field at the University, the Oregon Club Baseball Team only has the desire of its players and fans to keep it alive

Jon Roetman
Sports Freelancer

The smell of the grass. The sizzling sound of a ball hurled 90 miles-per-hour from a dirt hill located 60-feet-6-inches from home plate.

The unmistakable sound of a ball being launched toward a fence from an aluminum bat.

Each of these elements make baseball enjoyable for fans throughout the Pacific-10 Conference.

Except Oregon fans. While baseball fans around the Pac-10 prepare to cheer their teams to victory this spring, Duck fans will need to get their fix from a different source.

Duck fans have the option of focusing their attention on the club baseball team, because Oregon is the only Pac-10 school without a varsity baseball program.

The Ducks start their season Saturday in Vancouver, B.C., and junior starting pitcher Jordan Shaw said the team is looking to show people that baseball should be a big part of Oregon athletics.

"It's on our shoulders to represent Oregon with pride and to show them they made a mistake dropping the (baseball) program," Shaw said.

The school dropped baseball, along with men's and women's gymnastics, in 1981 because of budget problems. After dropping gymnastics, Title IX forced Oregon to drop either wrestling or baseball. It chose the latter.

This leaves the club team to represent the school in baseball. If that doesn't sound imposing enough, they have other obstacles as well, the most daunting be-

Club Sports Tuesday

ing they have no field to practice on.

The Ducks practice twice a week on the turf field by the Student Recreation Center and spend two days a week taking batting practice in cages. This means they will not see a grounder with any "true" hops, or face any "live" pitching before their season-opening series with Douglas College. Anyone who has ever played baseball knows how hard it is to hit live pitching when you have not practiced against it.

"I haven't seen a live pitch since Willamette," said junior shortstop Aaron House, who transferred to Oregon after two years with the Willamette varsity program.

Despite the obstacles, the Ducks feel positive about their upcoming season, as their 27-man roster is deep with pitching. The Ducks are coming off a season in which you could count their victories on one hand. At one point, the team had only nine players available.

"We had guys pitching who weren't pitchers," senior student coordinator Kalin Boodman said of the Ducks' roster problems last season. "We want to keep things a little more professional."

Three front-runners for the starting rotation are right-handed junior Matt Mensik, left-handed junior Patrick Orr and Shaw. Shaw said this is one of the best pitching staffs he has been associated with, top to bottom.

"We have a really deep staff coming

Turn to **Baseball**, page 10

Conference seniors leave their mark on Pac-10

The Pac-10 seniors are getting ready to play in their final conference games

Women's Pac-10 notes

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

It is time to bid adieu to the Pacific-10 Conference season and the conference's senior athletes.

With nine games left on the Pac-10 slate — four on Thursday and five Saturday — the conference's seniors are about to play their last

games in their respective uniforms.

Sure, players at Washington, Arizona and UCLA may get definite chances in the NCAA Tournament, but for the rest of the conference, these chances are dwindling fast.

"It's kind of becoming a reality that it's slimming down, you know, with our games," Washington's Loree Payne said after the Huskies beat Oregon on Saturday. "We have only three games left (including the tournament) in the regular season, and there's not many guarantees after that. This could be an awesome season for us."

Payne is one of five seniors on the Washington roster, a team that is loaded with experi-

ence. Surprisingly, two teams, Arizona State and Stanford, have played the entire season without a player set to leave the program at the end of the year.

That's an accomplishment, considering the Cardinal stand in first place in the Pac-10.

Meanwhile, California, stuck in ninth place in the Pac-10, sent its seniors out in style Saturday against USC. The Golden Bear seniors — Audrey Watler, Michelle Wald and Amber White — pitched in with just five points but were leaders in the win, according to Cal head coach Caren Horstmeyer.

"I've gotten on Amber about being a senior

recently, and she responded," Horstmeyer told the Daily Californian. "It's always nice to see your seniors do well on a day like today."

For the record, a Pac-10 senior leads the conference in scoring (UCLA's Michelle Greco, 19.4 ppg), is fifth in rebounding (Arizona's Krista Warren, 7.2 rpg), third in assists (Arizona's Julie Brase, 4.28 apg), and second in three-pointers made (Payne, 62).

McArthur Court loses its title

For the past four seasons, Oregon fans have averaged the highest attendance per game in

Turn to **Women's**, page 10

No joke: Cougars end skid

Washington State snaps a 21-game Pac-10 losing streak with a win over Oregon State

Men's Pac-10 notes

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

The Washington State men's basketball team won a game.

That's not a misprint. The Cougars won. Really. Don't laugh. This is not April Fool's Day.

Washington State (6-18 overall, 1-14 Pacific-10 Conference) won its first conference game since Jan. 31, 2002 with a 75-71 victory over Oregon State in Pullman on

Saturday. The Cougs had lost a school record of 21-straight Pac-10 games.

"I'm really happy for our team," WSU head coach Paul Graham said after the game. "It was great for our kids to finally come up the tunnel with smiles on their faces."

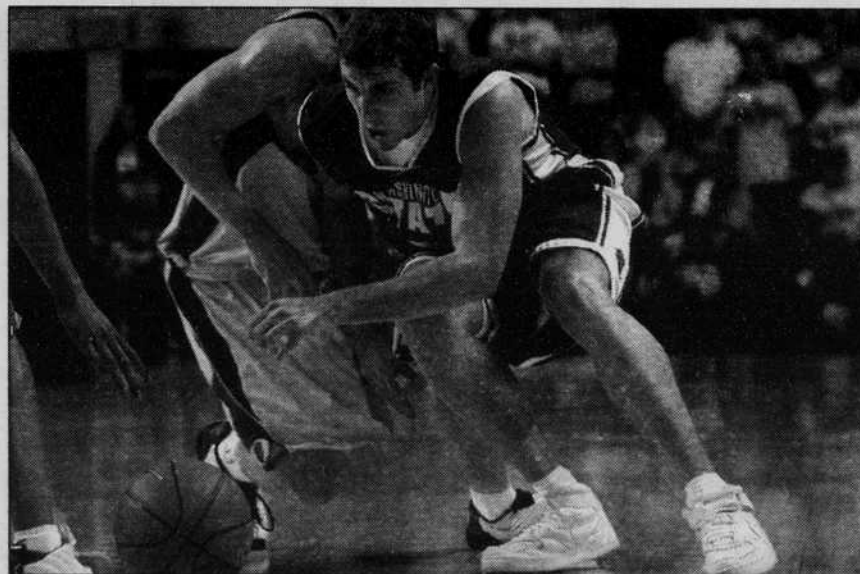
Washington State, which finished 1-17 in the conference last season, has been mired in turmoil this season, including a season-ending injury to junior guard Marcus Moore, one of the Pac-10's top scorers (19.3 points per game). Graham's future at Washington State has also been questioned around the Palouse this season.

But, at least for one night, the Cougars were saved — by a freshman walk-on. Randy Green, who scored a career-high 18 points against Oregon on Thursday, one-upped himself Saturday with 22 points, the only Cougar to score in double figures.

"For us, he is a godsend, an angel, whatever," WSU senior Milton Riley told The Spokesman-Review. "This is my guy."

After the Beavers defeated WSU in Corvallis last month, Oregon State guard Jimmie Hayward said that the Cougars would be a bad team even with Moore. The Cougars used that as motivation Saturday.

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Mark McCambridge Emerald

Chris Schlatter and the Cougars won their first Pac-10 game Saturday over Oregon State.